

Black Mountain Presbyterian Church

WEEKDAY SCHOOL



PARENT HANDBOOK

2023-2024

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Mission Statement

The Black Mountain Presbyterian Church Weekday School ministers to the young families of our community by combining Christian faith with the highest standards in early childhood education. Through our ministry, each child is challenged to reach his or her highest potential as a respected and loved child of God.

The Weekday School of the Black Mountain Presbyterian Church does not discriminate against applicants and students on the basis of race, color, and national or ethnic origin.



BLACK MOUNTAIN Presbyterian Church

Mary Katherine Robinson
Pastor, Head of Staff

August, 2023

David Carter Florence
*Associate Pastor for
Congregational Faith Formation*

Dear Weekday School Families,

Bob Tuttle
Parish Associate

Welcome to Black Mountain Presbyterian WeekDay School! We are thrilled that your child will be part of our preschool family. As a parent of three young adults, I know what it means to entrust your child's care and nurturing to others. Please know how honored we are by your trust in us to care for your child and how seriously we take our commitment to partner with you on your child's educational and faith journey.

Aaron Price
Director of Music and Worship Arts

As pastor and head of staff of this congregation, let me pledge to you our very best effort and our deepest commitment to making the time that you are with us at Black Mountain Presbyterian the very best it can be both for your child and your family!

Alice Patton
Director of Preschool Ministry

David Carter Florence (associate pastor), Aaron Price (our music director), and I have the great honor of leading story time with your children once a month throughout the school year. It is my privilege to share the love of God with your children and I strive for them to hear these three messages throughout the school year:

Brittany Williams
*Director of Congregational Life
and Children's Ministry*

Sam Webber
Director of Operations

- 1) They are a child of God and they are deeply loved by God.
- 2) There is nothing they can do to ever separate them from the love of God.
- 3) As the body of Christ here in this place, we belong to one another and are called to share the love of Christ with one another.

Jackie Kerr
Director of Communications

My hope is that you will reiterate this message at home as well.

Katie Duvall
Youth Coordinator

Some of you are members of this church family and are already involved in other areas of mission and ministry here at BMPC. Others of you might be looking for a church to make your spiritual home. In that spirit, I encourage you to worship and partner with us. Learn and laugh with us. Be inspired and grow with us. Join us for family worship at 10 a.m. on Sundays! I believe that this congregation is one of the most vibrant, welcoming, mission-oriented congregations I know, and we would love for you to be a part of it.

At BMPC, no matter who you are and where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here! If I can ever be of any help or support, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Welcome to our church family!

Rev. Mary Katherine Robinson (Pastor MK)
mk@bmpcnc.org

Black Mountain Presbyterian Church Weekday School

Alice Patton
Director

August 2023

Dear Families,

Welcome to Black Mountain Presbyterian Church Weekday School. We are greatly honored that you have chosen to enroll and entrust your child to us. We look forward to meeting our new children and families and renewing friendships with those who are returning. This handbook is written to give you a better understanding of our school and to explain to you our educational philosophy and policies. **It is very important that you be familiar with these guidelines as we strive to make this the best experience for both you and your child.**

We are proud to provide a program with a variety of experiences that are not only consistent with the highest standards of early childhood education, but also provide a multi-cultural curriculum which is developmentally appropriate to the age children we serve. Under the guidance of qualified teachers, each child will be respected as a child of God and allowed to develop in all aspects of growth – mental, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual. We are building an educational foundation of understanding concepts, skills, and attitudes necessary for future positive school experiences.

Our school is Christian-oriented but not denominationally sectarian. We stress those elements of the faith which are common to all Christians. We want our school to serve families within our community – to support them and encourage them in educating and nurturing young children. If you do not have a church home, we welcome your questions concerning Black Mountain Presbyterian Church and invite you to join us on Sundays.

I am excited to work with you and your child. I appreciate the diversity each family brings, and encourage you to feel at home in our school. Please provide us with any suggestions about our program so we can best serve the needs of all our children.

Sincerely yours,



Alice Patton

Alice Patton
Weekday School Director

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Weekday School Committee

Alice Patton, Ex Officio

Six members of the Black Mountain Presbyterian Church congregation

A Teacher Representative

Eight Parent Representatives (elected at August parent meeting)

Responsibilities of Weekday School Committee

Listed below are the responsibilities the Committee assumes as it works with the Director.

- Formulate major school policies for the overall goals of the school in keeping with our Mission Statement and Educational Philosophy.
- Formulate school policies for the operation of the school such as admission procedures and personnel policies.
- Serve as a liaison between the school and the Education Ministries and the Session of Black Mountain Presbyterian Church.
- Formulate a program of community relations and services and interpret the school to the community.
- Support the program developed by the staff.
- Recommend all major changes in personnel to the Session of BMPC through Education Ministries.
- Formulate budgetary needs for each year.
- Discuss enrollment requirements from time to time and review the needs of space and the school calendar.

Duties of Parent Representatives

(Please read carefully – each class will elect their representative in August and this is an important time commitment.)

In addition to the above, the parent representatives will be responsible for:

- Attending all Committee meetings as assigned.
- Getting to know the parents in the class represented so as to assist them and answer questions.
- Being responsible for making certain there are refreshments at Parent Gatherings.
- Assisting Director in planning programs.
- Coordinating class projects - i.e., providing food to families who have experienced a birth or a death.
- Coordinating and assist with special events.

Our Teaching Staff

Director	Alice Patton	828-713-9719
Four-Year-Olds Giraffe Class Teachers	April Roy, Lead Jen de Beer, Assistant Keelin Mooney, Assistant	828-273-0589 828-712-9749 828-279-6042
Three-Year-Olds Kangaroo Class Teachers	Laura Centers, Lead Alicia Mayer, Assistant	828-713-2781 828-712-9630
Two-Year-Olds Raccoon Class Teachers	Kristina Maldonado, Lead Gayle Burgin, Assistant	828-575-4846 828-803-0696
One-Year-Olds Lamb Class Teacher	Elisa Nail, Co-lead Lindsay Higgins, Co-lead	828-337-8227 828-713-6033

Children Learn

If children live with criticism, they learn to condemn.

If children live with hostility, they learn to fight.

If children live with fear, they learn to be apprehensive.

If children live with pity, they learn to feel sorry for themselves.

If children live with jealousy, they learn to feel envious.

If children live with blame, they learn to feel guilty.

- BUT -

If children live with encouragement, they learn to be confident.

If children live with tolerance, they learn to be patient.

If children live with praise, they learn to be appreciative.

If children live with acceptance, they learn to love.

If children live with approval, they learn to like themselves.

If children live with recognition, they learn it is good to have a goal.

If children live with fairness, they learn what justice is.

If children live with honesty, they learn what truth is.

If children live with security, they learn to have faith in themselves and those about them.

If children live with friendliness, they learn that the world is a nice place in which to live.

- Author Unknown

2023-2024 Preschool Calendar

August 22	Teachers Begin
August 29	6:30 pm – New Parent Orientation 7:15 pm – All Parent Classroom Orientation
August 30	Children Visit- 9:00 – 11:00
August 31	School Opens ½ Day, 8:30-10:30 (T/TH Lambs, Raccoons, Kangaroos) ½ of the Giraffe Class, 8:30-12:30
September 1	½ day, 8:30-10:30 (MWF Raccoons, Kangaroos) ½ of the Giraffe Class, 8:30-12:30
September 4	No School – Labor Day
September 5	First full day of school
September 8	½ day 8:30-10:30 (MWF Lambs)
October 3	Teacher Workday – No School
October 16	Teacher/Parent conferences begin
November 20	Thanksgiving Potluck Giraffes – 6:00 pm
November 21	Thanksgiving Potluck Lambs, Raccoons, Kangaroos – 12:00 pm
November 22-26	Thanksgiving break
December 15	Christmas Program – 11:30 am
December 16-January 1	Christmas Break
January 2, 2023	Teacher Workday
January 3	School begins
January 15	School Closed – Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
February 1	Registration
March 8	Teacher Workday
March 14	Annual Art Show
April 1	Spring Break
April 8	Flowering of the Cross, 12:00 p.m.
April 15	Parent/Teacher Conferences Begin
May 20	Last day of school MWF
May 21	Last day of school T/TH
May 22-24	Teacher Workdays (5/24 if necessary)

Possible make up snow days – **December 18, 19, and March 8**

Educational Philosophy

The Black Mountain Presbyterian Church Weekday School provides a program in which the Christian faith is taught and shared by children and teachers, and that is consistent with the highest standards of early childhood education. The Weekday School and the Church School of Black Mountain Presbyterian Church work together to provide an integrated Christian education program for children to play, work, learn, and grow together using shared equipment and resources.

The curriculum is based on the traditional American Nursery School approach, which uses teacher and child-initiated activities. The curriculum supports the belief that children learn best through active involvement with materials, other children, and adults in good play. Classrooms are set up in learning centers, and children are free to choose activities and move in and out of the centers. These centers allow and encourage individual differences in maturity, and challenge children to make discoveries on their own. Centers available daily on an age appropriate level may include: art center, writing center, collage center, block center, home center, manipulative center, science center, quiet area, water and sand play center, and book center. Games, math, special language arts activities, music and movement are also available in the classes. The teacher is responsible for setting up this learning environment, and guiding the children through age-appropriate activities as each child displays readiness. Children's interest and ideas are encouraged and teachers provide a time and space for creative, child-initiated activities. Some children will prefer to work on their own while others prefer to carry out projects as a group. These interests allow children to explore and learn at their own pace and in ways they choose.

We seek to provide an intellectually stimulating and emotionally wholesome environment for children to explore, ask questions, move, interact, experience, play, create, and progress developmentally in freedom within limits. Therefore, our approach is focused on the whole child and how that child learns physically, socially, emotionally, cognitively, and spiritually. We seek to integrate all these domains of development.

Teachers work to provide experiences that integrate more than one developmental domain knowing that the more complex the experience, the more stimulating and balanced the learning. Daily and monthly planning by teachers includes experiences in each of the following areas:

CREATIVE ART

- Each child has the opportunity to manipulate, explore, and create with a variety of art materials in a process-oriented rather than product-oriented manner. Paints, play dough, crayons, markers, and collage materials will be readily available for children. Good stewardship is encouraged by the use of recycled materials with collage and construction projects when possible while avoiding food stuffs such as beans, macaroni, rice, grits, etc. for art activities.
- Each child is encouraged to create out of his/her own feelings. As children grow and develop more thinking skills, they are encouraged to dictate stories about their art if they choose. Models, coloring books or other predetermined adult standards are not used. We want the children to feel proud of the work they do, and not be bound to a finished product for adults. Our art center is to be experiential, fun, and self-esteem building. Children's art work is valued by being on display for short periods of time in the classroom if the child so chooses. All types of art work, not just "the prettiest," can be displayed.

MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

- Each child has the opportunity to develop motor skills through use of appropriate large muscle and small muscle equipment, and will be observed by teachers who encourage and supervise development of these skills. Children are encouraged to run, hop, skip, climb, gallop, and crawl as well as pour, pull, tear, hold, string, and stack.

- Children play outside or in the church fellowship hall each day in order to use their large muscles for movement and exercise, and to work off their energy constructively. Teachers allow children free movement activities and planned games. Teachers value the different physical challenges and creativity of outdoor play as a welcome complement to indoor classroom play.

LANGUAGE AND LISTENING SKILLS

- Children are encouraged to engage in individual and group activities to develop listening skills and use of language.
- Vocabulary building is a part of every activity, and new words are introduced in a context that gives meaning and understanding. Words are sometimes introduced through music and movement.
- Children participate in activities to develop concepts of color, size, shape, position, location, relative number terms, relative weight and sizes, classification and substance. These concepts are reinforced through games and firsthand experiences.
- Children are encouraged to express themselves often with their peers and teachers to develop discussion and mediation skills.
- Pictures are taken of children's work and projects, and stories dictated and displayed to encourage the process of learning about the written word.
- Children are encouraged to explore the world around them and ask questions.
- Children are encouraged to bring in items from nature for sharing, touching, observing, and discussing as the seasons change.
- Each classroom has pets to feed and tend, and plant life to observe.
- Children are encouraged to experiment, ponder, and look for answers to questions instead of being told the answer. Questions children will hear to challenge their developing thinking may include: *What if? What do you think will happen? What are other ways we could find out?*
- Children have opportunities to hear many kinds of music and to sing, move, relax, or respond in other ways to music in the classroom, playground, and fellowship hall.
- Musical activities are used to teach concepts, reinforce learning, and develop skills, in addition to being enjoyed for their own sake.
- Music from a variety of cultures is heard, and will expose children to a variety of sounds and styles. International rhythm instruments are used so children can experiment and play.

DRAMATIC PLAY

- Children are encouraged to play and use their imagination outdoors, in learning centers (home, block, manipulative) and, more formally, in story time and group activities.
- Children have opportunities to use puppets, costumes, and other props to identify with people, times, and places in a make-believe world.
- Additional props are added as needed to enrich the imagination of young children.
- Themes that emerge in children's play are used as additional learning opportunities and integrated into other areas of learning.

MATH SKILLS

- Children are encouraged to sort, classify, and measure during both planned and unplanned activities in the school day.
- In order to provide understanding of math concepts, numbers, and skill in problem solving, children are given many opportunities for concrete experiences with math, using objects which can be touched, moved, and manipulated. Materials that can be counted (buttons, cups, and blocks) take precedence over rote counting. Real-life math experiences have children place blocks in graduated sizes on the shelves, count cups and napkins for snack, determine how many children can play in a center, and count the days on the calendar.

SOCIAL SKILLS

- Children are encouraged to relate to others in ways that are fair and satisfying for all in a group situation. Children learn how to enter play group situations and learn loving ways to be a friend. Respect for all children and adults are of paramount importance.
- Mediation skills are taught to provide children with the words to settle their differences. Children are encouraged to treat one another as children of God. Peace, justice, and fairness are modeled and taught as guiding principles.

SOCIAL STUDIES

- Children are taught their names and information about self and family.
- Children are taught an awareness of Christian and secular holidays and traditions. Children are helped to identify seasonal changes and events that occur during the different seasons.
- Children explore the many ways in which people live together, work, raise food, and travel in our diverse, multicultural world, and learn to celebrate diversity within our community and the world. Toys, books, posters, dress-up clothes, and dolls in the classroom will reflect world diversity.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Children are encouraged to practice good health and safety procedures inside and away from the classroom.
- Children are taught how to reduce the spread of germs with stringent hand washing.

RELIGIOUS CONCEPTS

- Children hear Bible stories, verses, and concepts appropriate for their age, and are taught the stories using songs, games, and dramatic activities. There is intentional inclusion of Bible stories, statements of Christian faith, and specific biblical concepts in the curriculum. Bible stories are chosen appropriately for each age level, not just because they are Bible stories. We acknowledge that the Bible is an adult book written by adults for adults. Therefore, we are more concerned with biblical truths than specific facts for young children. The standard for choosing Bible stories is based on the following concepts:

God is.

All the wonders of the world are God's gift.

God loves each of us as a person of worth.

God forgives the wrongs we do when we fail to trust, obey, or love God.

We know these things because Jesus came to tell and to show us they are true.

The Bible is the book that tells the story of God's love through Jesus Christ.

- Everyday experiences are interpreted in ways consistent with the biblical understanding of God’s plan for all people and with the teaching of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
- Each classroom has an open Bible and a picture of Jesus and the children. Children hear teachers read from this Bible. Religious concepts are integrated into the total curriculum and not taught as a separate subject. This integrated approach is designed to connect the learning of children during the week and on Sundays. The religious domain of a child’s development should not be separated from other developmental domains.
- Children will feel that “God loves them” through the care and nurture of teachers.
- Each family will know it is supported, respected, and nurtured by the teaching staff regardless of the religious beliefs of the family members.

Curriculum includes large group and small group experiences. In many ways, the small group experiences will be carried out in Primary Care Groups. Each teacher is responsible to interact daily and observe specifically the children in her small group. A snack is eaten in Primary Care Groups and teachers use this time for conversations, and to stay attuned to development.

This educational philosophy paper is a living “work in progress,” but is considered a guide for teachers and parents. We acknowledge that a child’s family is the primary teacher, and that as preschool teachers we are to enrich, broaden, and support parents. Resources are available to assist parents with the concepts of developmental learning and the growth stages of children. It is the goal of the Weekday School staff that the children and their desire for learning will enable the curriculum to develop into an active and exciting process that will provide a strong foundation for future learning.

Policies

1. Entrance Requirements

Age - A child must be 1, 2, 3, or 4 years old by midnight, August 31, to attend Weekday School classes.

REGISTRATION

- During February, registration will be open to: Children currently enrolled in the Weekday School who will be returning next year.

Children not currently enrolled who are children and grandchildren of members on the active roll of Black Mountain Presbyterian Church.

Siblings of children currently enrolled in the Weekday School.

- Registration will be held in Conference Room II on the first school day in February each school year.
- Registration forms will be available in January. Registration forms for currently enrolled children will be placed in their baskets or given directly to the parents. Registration forms for siblings and for children and grandchildren of members on the active roll of Black Mountain Presbyterian Church may be obtained at the Weekday School office.
- Currently enrolled children, children not currently enrolled whose parents or grandparents are on the active roll of the Black Mountain Presbyterian Church, and siblings of currently enrolled should fill out registration forms and place them in the envelope provided. They may be dropped off at the school during the last week of January and placed in the appropriate container.
- Children currently enrolled will have their names drawn from the lottery* at 8:00 a.m. on the first school day in February.

- Children not currently enrolled, who are children or grandchildren of members on the active roll of the Black Mountain Presbyterian Church, will have their names drawn from the lottery* at 8:30 a.m. on the first school day in February.
- Siblings of currently enrolled children will have their names drawn from the lottery* at 9:00 a.m. on the first school day in February.
- After the day of registration, parents who wish to trade their child's lottery-chosen slot with another parent may do so at their own discretion. This will not be an action of the Weekday School Committee or the Weekday School Director. The Director should be notified of the change by the parents involved.
- Registration for children currently enrolled, their siblings, and children not currently enrolled who are children and grandchildren of members on the active roll of Black Mountain Presbyterian Church will remain open until February 15th as spaces are available.

**Lottery - Sealed envelopes containing names of those wishing to register will be drawn randomly from a basket at the time designated for Registration. Registrations will be accepted in the order the names are drawn and spaces will be filled as they are available.*

Waiting List for Enrollment

A dated waiting list will be kept for those who seek to enroll their child in the Weekday School and do not meet the criteria for the February registration. This list will be in effect from the beginning of March each year until February 15 of the following year.

Those on the dated waiting list will be sent a letter on January 15. The parent is responsible for returning the letter to the Director of the Weekday School no later than February 15 to:

1. verify they still want their child on the waiting list.
2. verify the information on the child is correct (or make necessary corrections).

Once this information has been verified, the dated waiting list will become the *validated waiting list*.

Community Registration

Community registration will begin on the 3rd Monday in February. The Director will work through the *validated waiting list* to fill the remaining vacant spots in the classes for the school year beginning in September. Parents will be contacted according to the date the name was originally placed on the waiting list. Staff children will take precedence over waiting list when necessary.

Spaces Available after March

Vacancies that occur after the close of the community registration will be open to children on the validated waiting list or whose name has been added after February 15. Parents will be contacted according to the date the name was originally placed on the waiting list.

Registration fee for the school year - A registration fee of \$125 per child is to be paid at the time the parent registers a child and is due in February for each succeeding year a child is enrolled.

Enrollment Forms, Tuition and Insurance - Before a child can be admitted to the Weekday School, the Director must have on hand the enrollment forms, personal information forms, the physician's statement, a copy of the child's immunization form, permission form, and the tuition policy, discipline policy and behavioral support policy. All immunizations as recommended by the child's physician are required.

All enrollment forms and one month's advance tuition will be due by July 15 in order to secure the child's placement in the Weekday School for the upcoming year. Should the family withdraw by August 1, the advance tuition will be refunded. A group insurance policy is purchased each year to cover your child.

Toilet Training – Toilet training is not a prerequisite to entering the school.

2. Financial Arrangements – Fees for the 2022-2023 school year, based on a nonprofit budget, are:

One-year-olds	M/W or T/Th	\$220.00 per month
Two -and Three-year-olds	M.W.F.	\$270.00 per month
	T.Th.	\$220.00 per month
Four-year-olds	Mon-Fri	\$420.00 per month

Fees for the second or third child in the family will be 10% less.

Tuition - Tuition is based on the actual cost of operating the school. The first month's tuition is due along with all enrollment forms by July 15th each year. During the school year, tuition is payable by the first of each month. A notice will be placed in the basket of each child on the 5th of the month to remind parents who have not yet paid. If payment has not been received by the 10th of the month, there will be a delinquent charge of \$3.50 added to the tuition charge for that month. There will be a \$25.00 service charge on all returned checks. No credit on tuition is given for scheduled school holidays, family plans, or short illness (less than a month) which take the child out of school. Thirty days written notice is required to withdraw a child from the program. This enables the school to process an application from the waiting list. If withdrawal takes place after the start of the school year, payment is required for 30 days following the withdrawal notice, whether or not the child continues to attend the school during that period.

Scholarships – A limited amount of money is available for scholarships on an emergency basis. It is expected that a child on scholarship would be in attendance and participate in the program at least 90% of the allotted days each month with the exception of illness or emergency. If during the year you have need of this supplemental service, please speak with the Director and set up a time for a conference.

3. School Closure Policy

Due to weather conditions or other emergency situations, there may be times when the Weekday School needs to be closed.

In the event of unfavorable weather conditions, The Black Mountain Presbyterian Church Weekday School will follow the Buncombe County School recommendation for closure. When Buncombe County closes by districts only, we will follow the Owen School District. When Buncombe County has a virtual day, we will look at conditions in our area and make a decision about whether to have school. All school closures will run on WLOS TV; we will be listed as BMPC Weekday. If the school is closed, teaching staff are expected to report in for a workday if road conditions are suitable for safe travel. On days when there is a 2 hour delay for the county, we will open at 10 AM. However, if there is a 3 hour delay we will remain closed. The Weekday School will have 3-6 days built in to the schedule between December and May that we will use as make up days if needed. There will be no tuition discounts given for missed days.

Other situations, including but not limited to electrical power failure, lack of heat or air conditioning or other situations which may endanger the safety and health of children and employees, may result in the Weekday School facilities being closed at the discretion of the Weekday School Director.

4. Arrival and Dismissal

The school day is from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

No child will be released to a person not authorized by the custodial parent/guardian.

We will check the Drivers License of the person picking up to verify correct identification.

Arrival

Parents are asked to bring their children no earlier than 8:30. Class begins when the first child arrives and there are a variety of activities in which each child may participate. Parents are reminded that a child who constantly arrives late will feel left out of the activities enjoyed by the other children in their class.

Dismissal

Dismissal time is 12:30 p.m. It is very important that the child be picked up on time by the expected person. A child becomes concerned and fearful when all the other children have departed and he/she is the only one left. Promptness and consistency on the part of the parent is how the child learns the concept of trust.

Tardy Pick-ups

Pick-up of the children at the stated departure time is important not only for your child but also for the daily schedule of the school. Teachers have scheduled work time after the departure of the children. They must clean up, set up for the next day, and spend some time in planning before their work ends for the day. Failure of parents to pick up their children on time causes an unnecessary hardship on the teachers.

Parents who have not picked up their child by 12:40 will be considered **tardy**. A **tardy fee** of \$20 will be imposed for each infraction. Failure to pay the tardy fee(s) by the next month's tuition due date will result in termination of the child from the Weekday School.

A **Tardy Record** showing the date and time of the tardy infraction will be completed each time the parent is late. This form will be signed by the parent at the time of the pick-up and will be filed in the child's record. Time will be determined by a clock on the hallway wall.

In case of emergency or unavoidable delay, the late fee can be negotiated. The parent should call prior to 12:30 p.m. (669-2725 ext. 1114) and leave a message for the director or teacher concerning the emergency or delay.

Approved by Weekday School Board - May 20, 2003, Service Ministries - June 9, 2003, Session - June 23, 2003

5. Parking Lot Safety

The safety of children while in the parking lot is a major concern. Parents must be responsible for their children when they are being brought to school, picked up from school and anytime a parent comes with a child during the school day.

Children are to be brought to the classroom by their parent or other responsible adult and left in the care of the teacher in the classroom unless they are being dropped off for the Giraffe Class. Then, be certain a teacher is watching. At the end of the day, teachers will keep the children in the classroom until the parent or responsible adult comes for the child.

While outside the building and in the parking lot, the adult should hold the child by the hand so that the child cannot dash out in front of a car.

Children should never be left alone in a car. Cars can pop out of gear too easily. Please bring all your little ones inside the building each time. We must all be proactive in our attempts to keep our children safe.

Parental Safety Tips *(from Asheville Citizen-Times, July 2001)*

- Never leave a child alone in a vehicle, not even to run a quick errand.
- Keep vehicles locked at all times, even in the garage or driveway.
- Teach children never to play in or around a vehicle.
- Keep keys out of children's reach.
- If you see a small child alone in a car, find the parents immediately or call the police.
- If a child is missing, check cars and trunks immediately.

Dangers to Children *(from Asheville Citizen-Times, July 2001)*

- Children like to pretend to drive, and that can set the vehicle in motion.
- Children can die in less than 15 minutes if left inside a hot vehicle.

- Children love to play hide-and-seek; car trunks are deadly hiding places.
- Children left in cars with the engine running are at risk of being kidnapped by car thieves.
- Children can burn themselves with cigarette lighters.

6. Observations and Visits

Parents are always welcome at school. We love to have your help! We do ask that you give us at least the first month to get the children settled into the classroom routine before you ask to come see us. It is very important for the children to understand that school is their place and that “my family always comes back to get me.” Parents and other interested adults are welcome to observe the Weekday School program. Appointments are encouraged but not necessary.

7. Separation

In order for your child to have a positive and happy experience when entering school, we suggest the following guidelines:

- Apprehension for parent and child is normal. Relax. Attitudes are important. Your hesitancy can be felt by your child.
- **Expect** the child to go to school happily and to have a good time.
- Make an initial visit to see the room and meet the teachers before school starts. Use her name frequently, so the child becomes familiar with it.
- If your child needs you, you may stay the first morning or for a part of the following mornings. Talk with your child about the toys you see and try to get him/her involved. Let your child know you are staying. We do encourage you to get involved in reading a book or some other absorbing activity to keep from focusing all your attention on the child. Begin to pull back without the child feeling you are.
- **NEVER** sneak away without saying goodbye to your child.
- When you and the teacher feel it is time to say goodbye, do so, and then leave quickly and unhesitatingly without looking back. Once you are gone, usually the child will settle down. **We will be glad to call you and give you a progress report. We will not let your child continue to cry uncontrollably.**
- Please do not hang around outside the classroom door, but the first few mornings you are welcome to go to the small conference room at the end of the hall to wait, and we will let you know when your child is fine.
- Please do not peep in the window to check on your child because that makes separation harder. If necessary, a child may walk with a teacher to get water, thus helping to keep the other children from getting upset. Usually a child will be ready to stop crying and get back to the classroom to play after a short time away.
- If separation seems too much at first, we may ask you to pick up the child earlier for a few days or perhaps to carpool and have someone else bring your child to school.
- Be sure and give your child some extra time, hugging, and loving during the opening days. Try not to ask too many questions about school but let the time be as gentle, casual, and non-threatening as possible.
- As part of growing in independence and with courage, we ask that **children walk into the building**, and leave the same way. Separation is much more pleasant and secure for children when they walk in on their own, with you by their side, rather than being carried.

Because separation is difficult for children and parents, we want to work with you to make the beginning time as smooth as possible. Working together we can give your child confidence in leaving you and knowing that you trust in us.

8. Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled twice a year, and parents are requested to sign up. Conferences may also be scheduled any time the parent or teacher feels it is necessary. We want to assist you in any way that we can to help your child adjust to school and relate to you your child's growth and development.

Prior to your conference, you will be given the *Ages and Stages Questionnaire*. This is a developmental screening tool that will need to be completed by you. Teachers will also complete the questionnaire as a comparison. It is designed to be used by parents because you know your child better than anyone. These questionnaires will be used at both the Fall and Spring conferences. It gives you the chance to clearly identify your child's strengths and any possible delays.

We are always willing to talk with you concerning your child, but we do ask that you not talk about your child in your child's presence. No one likes to be talked about. If you need a conference or a quick phone call, arrange it at a time when your child is not around.

Also, instead of saying, "Was my child good today?" (We will always say "yes" in your child's presence), ask your child, "What fun things did you do at school today?" If there is a behavioral problem, we will let you know. Otherwise, your positive attitude will give your child a positive attitude and will encourage that child to feel good about himself/herself and the times at school and learning.

9. Health and Safety

The school will make every effort possible to protect the health and safety of the children. Upon enrollment, parents must file with us a health form, signed by the child's physician, and an up-to-date certificate of immunizations. If parents have chosen not to have their child immunized, then the child's physician must sign a letter that he/she is under care and the physician is aware of the parent's decision.

Cooperation of parents in helping prevent the spread of communicable diseases is of great importance. Children who are sick – **even a little sick** – are best treated at home. We ask you to please be considerate of other children and staff and not to knowingly bring your sick child to school.

For a child's protection and the protection of others in the group, the staff asks you to keep a child home:

- If he/she has a fever or has had one during the previous 24 hour period.
- If he/she is on an antibiotic, wait at least two days (48 hrs.) or until the child is feeling better.
- If he/she has a heavy or green nasal discharge.
- If he/she has a constant cough.
- If he/she is fussy, cranky, and generally not up to par or just really tired.
- If he/she has vomited or had diarrhea in the previous 24 hours.
- If he/she has symptoms of a possible communicable disease (lice, impetigo, strep throat, chicken pox).

Please call the school if your child has a communicable disease or has been absent from school for more than two days, so staff and parents can be alerted to watch the other children. Children are encouraged and expected to wash their hands upon entering the classroom each morning, after bathrooming and play. Hand washing is a big issue in early childhood programs and we will be asking children to wash hands frequently. Please be conscientious about this in your family, also. We also ask your help as we work with children in proper health procedures such as using a tissue when coughing and sneezing.

Your child may come to school:

- If he/she has an allergy but is feeling fine and you have discussed this with the Director.
- When you are certain your child is no longer contagious.

If a child becomes ill at school, we will notify the parent to come and pick up the child. Please keep all emergency phone numbers current.

In case of accidental injury, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent. If we cannot reach you, we will contact the person listed as an emergency person, or contact the child's physician. If necessary, we will also call the ambulance.

Until the arrival of a parent, the physician, or an ambulance, the Director will be in charge and make all decisions about the care of the child. You will be expected to assume responsibility for any resultant expense not covered by the school insurance. Please keep the school up-to-date on phone numbers, emergency numbers, and other pertinent information and remember to sign out so we can reach you in a time of need.

Children's safety is our top priority. We have an Emergency Preparedness Plan in place. The exterior doors to the school will be locked each day at 9:00 AM. If you arrive after that time you will be required to enter through the front doors of the church. In the event that we have an unsafe visitor on the grounds or a child custody battle concern, the school will go into lock down mode. The teachers will close all classroom blinds and lock all doors and will direct the children to a safe place. The police will be called immediately. The director will communicate with the teachers via walkie talkies if necessary.

Fire Drills are conducted once a month during the school year. Staff will lead children through the appropriate steps in vacating the building in case of fire. The children will be led to a safe spot on the playground where they will be counted and given further instructions.

In case of a tornado warning, the teachers will move all the children to a safe area of the building where they will remain until the warning is lifted.

Your child will not be released to anyone unless we have written or verbal confirmation from you, or they are on your list as someone who may pick up your child. Everyone will have their identity checked prior to our releasing your child. In case of an emergency situation, children will not be released to anyone except their own family without verbal confirmation by phone.

10. Insurance

We recommend that you have your own medical and accident insurance for your child. As part of your registration fee you have purchased a half day, nine month policy at the price of \$3.20 for your child. This insurance policy through the school covers your child while at school and transportation to and from school.

11. Clothing

Our school will provide daily activities in art, sand, and/or water play as well as outdoor play. Please dress your child in comfortable, washable play clothes and sneakers. (Long dresses, flip flops, boots, and shoes with no back strap do not allow a child to climb ladders or run fast and are not allowed.) Please be certain that your child's clothing allows for self dressing.

Smocks are used for art and water play, but accidents still happen. Therefore we ask each child to have at school a plastic zip-locked bag with a complete change of clothes that is updated seasonally (shorts and snow do not go together). Please bring this change of clothes on the first day of school and check it frequently to determine its usability.

If your child is in diapers or in the process of toilet training we ask that you:

- Keep 2 extra diapers in your child's basket.
- Keep extra training pants, pants, and socks and shoes plus a plastic bag in the basket.

- Have your child wear easy to manage clothes, so that when he/she does need to go to the bathroom, he/she can do so independently and quickly.

12. Toys and Personal Belongings

Children should not bring toys, guns, jewelry, chap stick or makeup to school. We have lots of toys at school, and we know it is much easier to share school toys than personal toys. Also, we cannot be responsible for these items. Cartoon inspired toys encourage specific sorts of play. They keep children from the open ended activities which we offer and from the excellent equipment we provide. Chap stick and makeup spread germs because they are used by more than the original owner. These are issues that are of great concern to the teachers, so please help us and help your children learn to cooperate with our school rules.

13. What Children Can Bring to School

The teachers are eager for children to share special discoveries which they make at home or on trips with their families. Items representative of the changing seasons are always welcomed. Books or CDs may be brought to school to share at group time.

14. Messages

Verbal messages from the children cannot be accepted by the teachers. Please write a note or telephone the message. No child will be released to a person not authorized by a parent.

15. Snack

The Child and Adult Care Food Program Recommendations of the United States Department of Agriculture expect early childhood programs to serve snacks from two food groups. Therefore, each morning water and a cracker, vegetables, cheese, or fruit will be served around 10:30. To offset expenses for the school year, parents are asked to bring snacks each month. **Please check the package for freshness dates as we cannot serve the children out of date foods. We are a PEANUT FREE school. Please check the approved list before purchasing any crackers. Each month, please provide one item from list A, and one item from list B.** Please be aware of how many children are in your child's class and if there are any food allergies that will affect your selection.

Lambs – 7 children and 2 adults

Kangaroos – 11 children and 2 adults

List A

Fresh raw fruits and vegetables
Dried Fruit
Yogurt
Cheese
Sunbutter

Raccoons – 8 children and 2 teachers

Giraffes – 18 children and 3 teachers

List B

Variety of crackers, pretzels, chips,
Graham crackers, **(peanut free, and not made in a factory that produces peanut products.)**

In addition to these items, parents are welcome to bring special snacks such as muffins or different breads. Just check this with your child's teacher to see if there are any class allergies.

Water is served with snack each morning because of the body's need for water and not sugary juices. Studies show that most American children do not drink enough water. Therefore, children have access to cups of water throughout the morning and at snack time. Learning is also enhanced as children hydrate their brain cells. Water is a necessary conductor for all electrical and chemical reactions in the brain.

16. Birthdays

If your child has a birthday during the school year, please talk with your child's teacher if you want to bring a special, not too sweet, snack such as cookies or muffins. (Chocolate crumbs in quantity are difficult to clean up.) Maybe you and your child could make this snack together to share at school. We really prefer this special snack not be cupcakes with icing. Also, remember we have children with special dietary needs, so please plan with your child's teacher. Your child's teacher can also alert you to any food allergies or health issues that may be in the group.

Please do not bring balloons or favors for birthdays. Deflated balloons can be very dangerous, and it is hard to deal with favors at school. If you are having a party, please do not bring invitations to school, unless you are inviting the entire class.

Our emphasis at school will be on the unique and special way each child is growing - just as God planned. We want to keep the time special and happy, but also simple and not too over stimulating.

17. Volunteers

From time to time we need parent volunteers to help with special events, field trips, and in the classroom to play and enjoy the children. We encourage you to enter into our school activities. This can be a positive time of play and togetherness with you, your child, friends, and teachers. In October we will hold a training for all available parents and grandparents who plan on volunteering during the year.

18. Field Trips

Our three- and four-year-old classes will take walking field trips throughout the year to places we feel are of benefit to our learning experiences. These trips are carefully planned for learning with safety as a top priority. A first-aid kit travels with us as well as emergency information on each child. When a field trip is planned, you will be notified and several parents will be asked to accompany us so we can have plenty of hands.

19. Family Pictures

Please send in family pictures by the first week of school. We would like a snapshot of each child's family so that it can be mounted and displayed. These provide comfort and conversation as children see their families, and remind them of the really important people in their lives. It is important for each child that a picture of their family is posted so they can show their friends. Small collages or composites of several pictures may be used. Just do it! Thank you and your child thanks you.

20. Newsletter

A school newsletter will be published monthly to keep you updated on our happenings. Please take time to read it.

21. Daily Program

FOUR-YEAR-OLD CLASS

Class for all children in the four-year-old Weekday School Program will be held 5 days a week. At the beginning of each school year the four-year-old class will be divided in half. The first school day half of the enrollment will attend. The second school day the other half of the enrollment will attend. The third day of school the full enrollment for the four-year-old class will attend.

TWO- AND THREE-YEAR-OLD CLASSES

Two- and three-year-old children may be enrolled in either the Tuesday, Thursday or Monday, Wednesday, Friday class as space is available.

Two- and three-year-old children of Weekday School teachers may be enrolled in both the Tuesday, Thursday and the Monday, Wednesday, Friday classes.

Three spaces in the two-year-old class and three spaces in the three-year-old class will be available for a child to be enrolled in both the Tuesday, Thursday and the Monday, Wednesday, Friday classes. These spaces will be made available only to single working parents or 2 parent households in which both parents are working outside the home. The parent(s) work schedule(s) at the time of registration must necessitate the child being enrolled for the 5 days a week in order to provide consistency of care of the child. These registrations will be by lottery* as described in 1. Entrance Requirements. Monthly tuition will be a combined total of the tuition for the 2 day a week class and 3 day a week class.

ONE-YEAR-OLD CLASS

One-year-old children may be enrolled for either Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday classes.

**Lottery - Sealed envelopes containing names of those wishing to register will be drawn randomly from a basket at the time designated for Registration. Registrations will be accepted in the order the names are drawn, and spaces will be filled as they are available.*

22. Special Needs

The Weekday School is not staffed or equipped to serve children with serious special needs. Children with minor special needs will be considered on an individual assessment basis.

23. Changes in Enrollment Status

The Weekday School reserves the right to change the status of a currently enrolled child if the child's adjustment to school is unsatisfactory. That process will be as follows:

- The child's parents and teacher will confer to try and resolve the situation.
- The Director will meet with parents and teacher for additional advice.
- The Director will consult with community child development professionals as to services available and ways the Weekday School might address the child's issues.
- The child may be placed on a temporary leave of absence and, if necessary, scholarship money may be used to maintain the child's position in Weekday School. In order for a child to be placed on a temporary leave of absence, that child would have to exhibit behavior suggestive that the child might be an endangerment to the other children, self, or staff.
- Parents may be required to seek a professional evaluation for their child through the Director's request.
- If the parents are not in agreement with the Weekday School staff advisement, then the only alternative would be for the child to be withdrawn from the school and any advanced tuition refunded.
- This decision will be made after consultation with the Committee chair, the Elder Representative to the Committee, and the Director. The decision of the school shall be final.

24. Differences between Parents and Staff

If a parent has a difference with a teacher that cannot be easily resolved, the procedure is as follows:

- The parent and teacher will meet together to discuss their differences.
- If issues remain unresolved, then the Director will meet with the parent and teacher together.
- If needed, both sides will put in writing the issues for review by the Personnel Work Group of the Weekday School Committee. The Committee will decide if further intervention is necessary.

25. Child Abuse and Neglect

By North Carolina law, teachers are required to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. If such cases arise, the alerted staff member will report to the Director. The Director will then notify the Protective Services Unit of the Department of Social Service. The Director will keep the Committee Chair and Elder Representative informed of this action and the results.

If a parent accuses a member of the staff of Black Mountain Presbyterian Weekday School of child abuse and/or neglect, the following procedures will be followed:

- The report of abuse and/or neglect to the Buncombe County Department of Social Services will be made by the parent. The Director and/or the Chair of the Personnel Work Group of the Weekday School Committee will assist the parent in reporting if necessary.
- In addition to the investigation by the Buncombe County Department of Social Services there will be an internal investigation by the Director and/or the Personnel Work Group of the Weekday School Committee.
- The staff member will be relieved of duties until the internal investigation is completed.
- If the abuse and/or neglect charge is substantiated by the internal Work Group, the staff member will be terminated immediately.

26. Supplies

Each child in the 4's (Giraffe class) are asked to bring:

1 package of washable markers
1 box of tissues
1 roll masking tape
1 pair of child-sized scissors
1 glue stick
A family photo

1's (Lambs) are asked to bring:

2 large packages of baby wipes
1 large box of tissues
1 box gallon ziplocs
A family photo
Diapers or pull-ups as needed

3's (Kangaroos) are asked to bring:

1 package of washable markers
1 large pop-up box of tissues
1 box 5 oz. cups
1 can shaving cream
A family photo

2's (Raccoons) are asked to bring:

2 packages of baby wipes
1 large box of tissues
1 box 5 oz. cups
1 box washable markers
A family photo

Discipline Policy

Someone once said, "Discipline is the gift of responsible love."

When children receive positive, non-violent, and understanding interactions from adults and others, they develop good self-concepts, problem-solving abilities, and self-discipline. They learn to take responsibility for their own behavior. Based on this belief of how children learn and develop values, this school will practice the following discipline and guidance policy:

WE DO

1. praise, reward, and encourage the children. We also give hugs.
2. reason with and set limits for the children and give gentle reminders.
3. model appropriate behavior for the children.
4. modify the classroom environment in order to anticipate trouble and motivate productive behavior.
5. listen to the children and offer choices.
6. provide alternatives for inappropriate behavior.
7. provide the children with natural and logical consequences of their behavior.
8. treat each child as a person and respect his/her needs, desires, and feelings.
9. overlook small annoyances.
10. explain things to the children on their level and try to clarify issues.
11. use short, supervised periods of "time out" or "renewal time." These are only used when the child is feeling out of control and needs help calming down and focusing. A teacher is always nearby.
12. inject humor.
13. stay consistent in our behavior, guidance and discipline.

WE DON'T

1. spank, shake, bite, pinch, push, pull, slap or otherwise physically punish the children.
2. make fun of, yell at, threaten, make sarcastic remarks about, use profanity or otherwise verbally abuse the children.
3. shame or punish the children when bathroom accidents occur.
4. relate discipline to eating, resting, or sleeping.
5. deny food or rest as a punishment.
6. leave the children alone, unattended, or without supervision.
7. place the children in locked rooms, closets, or boxes as punishment.
8. allow discipline of children by children.
9. criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle children, their families or ethnic group.

Behavior Support Policy

Black Mountain Presbyterian Church Weekday School Staff will use supportive guidance strategies when teaching young children how to manage their own behavior. Child guidance practices will promote positive social skills, foster mutual respect, strengthen self-esteem, and support a safe environment.

Positive behavior strategies that we will use every day with each child are:

- Encouragement
- Positive Praise
- Choices
- Limits
- Daily Documentation
- Redirection to a soft and safe space

In the event that these strategies are not working and we are having further classroom behavioral difficulties we will:

- Talk with the parents/guardian
- Use Center planning sheets
- Use Observational Timelines
- Have a Parent/Guardian Teacher Conference to inform and discuss the classroom behavior and to inquire about home behavior
- Create a Plan for home and school
- Continue Documentation

If after all these methods are tried, the child is not responding, we will acquire parental/guardian permission to:

- Call in a Behavior Specialist to observe
- Make recommendations and referrals for additional community resource agencies and physicians
- Implement IEP (Individual Education Plan) in the classroom and at home

Our primary goal is to make sure that your child is successful in a classroom setting. Our staff is trained to handle most behavior situations, but we cannot do it without the support of families. If the parents/guardians are not willing to assist us in this process, refuse to follow up with our recommendations, or the child begins harming themselves or others, and we have tried all measures that we have available, we will provide you with a 2 week notice and we will assist you in finding another preschool which may meet the needs of both your child and family.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping us to make all children feel safe and loved in this environment. As a team, we can make this a great year for everyone.

ONE-YEAR-OLDS

Lambs

Schedule

Our one-year-old class has seven children with two teachers. This program is designed to give toddlers an opportunity to experience community living in a creative, planned environment. The children are able to interact with loving adults in a setting other than their home environment, and to learn about living in a small school group. Our schedule will usually be as follows:

8:30	Greetings as children arrive and transitioning them into the play setting
9:00- 9:45	Art, puzzles, special activities, reading books, playing, crawling and toddling with toys
9:45	Stroller Ride, weather permitting
10:15	Snack
10:45	Diaper changing or taking to bathroom while others are playing
11:00	Outside Playground (every day as much as weather permits) or Gym
12:00	Read books, quiet play, diaper check
12:30	Dismissal

TWO-YEAR-OLDS

Raccoons

Our two-year-old class of eight children, staffed by two qualified teachers, is planned to give a positive group experience whereby the children feel loved and secure while separating from their families. The children are encouraged to choose from varieties of materials and equipment that have been set out by the teachers and to work and play at their own pace side by side with other twos. The morning schedule will usually look like this, but with twos we will be very flexible:

8:30	Greeting children and talking with them about their choices of activities in centers. Block Play Puzzles and Pegs Trucks and Cars Reading books Easel Painting Science activities Art Activities Sand/water play Manipulative toys Playdough Housekeeping and dress-up
9:45	Bathrooming and Diapering
10:15	Clean-up and group time, songs, fingerplays, movement and music
10:30	Snack
11:15	Outside to playground, every day that weather permits
12:20	Closing Story time
12:30	Dismissal

Our schedule changes as the seasons do. As the children grow, our activities expand to meet their ever growing needs.

TWO-YEAR-OLDS

Raccoons

Curriculum Emphases

Each day will be filled with play, music, art, stories, and use of large muscles. There will be special experiences each month that will contribute to each child's learning, and teachers will follow the children's interests in lesson planning. Planned special emphasis for each month will be:

September	Coming to school Getting to know one another and the classroom routines Feelings We are alike, but different. We are Friends
October	Fall and Fall colors Apples Pumpkins
November	I live in a family Foods that are good for me Thanksgiving and thankfulness - "I am glad."
December	Advent – Getting ready for Christmas Christmas: Jesus is born Giving gifts
January	Introduce Storytelling Experiencing winter weather Bears and animals in winter Discovering our five senses
February	Valentines, We Can Give Love Pets and other animals Dental Health
March	Rain, wind, and kites Spring God Loves Me Palm Sunday and Easter
April	Frogs and Tadpoles Caterpillars and Butterflies
May	Outdoor fun Mother's Day Bugs and Bees

THREE-YEAR-OLDS

Kangaroos

Our three-year-old class of eleven children, staffed by two qualified teachers, is a child-centered developmental program. Under the guidance and support of the teachers, a child selects from a wide range and variety of activities which encourage learning by doing. Children at this age are moving from side by side or independent play to interactive play with peers. Our teachers focus on guiding this developmental stage. There is a time in the morning both for child selected and teacher led activities. The morning will usually follow this type of schedule:

8:30

Children arrive and are greeted by teachers.

Children are encouraged to choose from the activities which have been set out and to follow their interests.

Block play	Nature and science activities
Housekeeping and dress up	Books
Puzzles	Table games for counting,
Playdough	learning shapes and/or letters
Easel painting	Sand/Water play
Manipulative toys (such as pegs, bristle blocks)	Special Art Activities
	Group Games

Depending on the special topic for the morning or week there will be other special activities such as cooking. Pretending is a big component of this first part of the morning as children creatively expand their play themes.

9:00

Group/Circle

9:15

Centers

9:30

Bathroom/Centers

10:10

Cleanup

10:20

Songs/Story acting

10:30

Snack

11:00

Outside

12:30

Dismissal

THREE-YEAR-OLDS

Kangaroos

Curriculum Emphases

Each day will be filled with play, music, art, stories, and large muscle activities. There will be special experiences each month that will contribute to the child's learning, and the children's interests will be followed in lesson planning. The planned special emphasis for each month could be the following subjects, although topics may vary according to the interests of the children:

September	Welcome to School! Our School Family Learning about Our Feelings
October	Introduce Storytelling Celebrating Fall Colors and Shapes 5 Senses
November	Healthy Foods Taking care of our bodies Families Thanksgiving
December	Advent – preparing for Christmas Christmas – a time to share gifts and celebrate the birth of Jesus
January	Epiphany – the Wise Men visit Jesus Celebrating Winter Hibernation/Winter Animals Naming an important Person - Martin Luther King, Jr.
February	Transportation Valentine's Day – a time of showing love for friends, family and God Dental Health
March	Dinosaurs Celebrating spring Palm Sunday The Easter Story
April	Caterpillars and Tadpoles Pets Earth Week
May	Seeds and Plants Mother's Day Ocean Life

FOUR-YEAR-OLDS

Giraffes

Our four-year-old class with eighteen children and three qualified teachers is an active, child oriented classroom with carefully planned learning experiences concerned with the child's total development. We work with children on fostering independence and promoting traditional cognitive thinking skills, but we work equally hard to help children develop socially, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. You will see four-year-olds busily engaged sorting out information relevant to their concrete learning t hey experience as they are playing together in a caring and nurturing environment.

8:30	Arrival and greeting Puzzles, Books, manipulative toys, working in centers
8:45	Opening Ritual Fingerplays, songs, calendar, weather, sharing, prayer
9:00	Center time Blocks Housekeeping and dress up Painting at easel Art at tables Creation station Fine motor manips Sand and water tables Puzzles Writing Ipad station Books Listening to books on tape Math games Science exploration Loft Language Art Activities
10:15	Clean up, toileting, washing hands, setting tables for snack Books, music, teacher story time while everyone finishes
10:30	Blessing and snack
10:55	Small group time (1 teacher, 8 children) Activities, stories, discussion
11:15	Outside play (Every day, weather permitting, or Gym during inclement weather)
12:15	Closing ritual Children tell their own stories Review of the day, set the stage for tomorrow
12:30	Dismissal

As our year progresses, we will have field trips and guests to broaden our children's experiences. In our individualized approach to teaching, the young child can move at his/her own pace and build a concept of being a successful, competent person who finds enjoyment in learning for the sake of learning. Our three primary care groups ensure engagement of a teacher with each child not only during centers but in small group and at snack.

FOUR-YEAR-OLDS

Giraffes

Curriculum Emphases

September	Welcome to school Building Class Community/Making Friends Exploring Emotions Kindness
October	Welcome, Fall Community Helpers Nocturnal Animals Spiders Pumpkins
November	Seeds and Plants Harvest/Farms Healthy Foods SVCM Service Project Thankfulness/Thanksgiving
December	Advent Family Holiday Traditions The Nativity Story SVCM Service Project Giving
January	Epiphany Welcome, Winter Fairness Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dinosaurs
February	Love Valentine's Day Post Office Human Body In-depth Art Project (TBA)
March	In-depth Art Project continued St. Patrick's Day Welcome Spring Palm Sunday and Easter Fairy Tales
April	Weather Earth Day Insects
May	Mother's Day Oceans/Creeks/Ponds Kindergarten Conversations Saying Goodbye